A Soveraign PRESERVATIVE *Against* ANABAPTISM,

COMPOSED

Of Scripture Ingredients:

As it was lately adminiſtred to a few, and is now preſcribed to all that will make uſe of it.

By MATTHIAS SYMSON, *A. M.* Miniſter of the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt* at MARDEN in *Kent.*

ACT. 2.38,39. — *Be baptized,* — *For, the promiſe is unto you, and to your children.*

JOB 5.27. *Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is, hear it, and know thou it for thy good.*

Quæſo ut patienter audias: non enim de adverſario victo iam, ſed contra mendacium quærimus veritatem. Legant prius, & poſtea deſpiciant, ne videantur non ex judicio, ſed ex odii preſumptione ignorata damnare.

Novemb. 18. 1651. *Imprimatur.*
EDM. CALAMY.

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To those that are commonly called ANABAPTISTS, dwelling in and about MARDEN;

The AUTHOUR wisheth *Repentance, to the acknowledging of the Truth.*

SIRS,

BEing by providence called to exercise my Ministery in this place, deeply infected, and over-spread with the weed of Anabaptisme, the seeds whereof had been sow'd by no mean Artists; and considering my own inabilities, as being more accustomed to Positive, then Polemicall Theologie; I had some combatings within my breast, between Hope and Fear; hoping that I might be some way instrumentall to prevent the spreading thereof, and fearing that my weakness might prove disadvantageous to the truth. But considering that F. C. C. B.

the cauſe is the Lords, I was ſweetly encouraged in God to ſet my ſelfe, (though nothing in my ſelfe; for who is ſufficient for theſe things?) *to defend the truth againſt all* Gain-ſayers, *as being confident of the* ſufficiency of God's grace. We have this treaſure in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. *And truly, the Lord hath been with me, ſo that hitherto the truth hath loſt nothing by my weakneſſe. I have met, indeed, with much oppoſition by ſome of your ſect, (once you may remember that I had to do with an Hoſt of them under the conduct of one of your Champions;) and have gone through many conflicts, both in conferring, and writing; yet have I not been ſo much as wounded by the edge of any one Argument produced by any of your Champions.*

2 Cor. 2. 16.
2 Cor. 12. 9.
2 Cor. 4. 7.
Viz. Mr Fiſher. *Sept.* 10. 1649.

After ſome time and experience, which is the daughter of time, *I perceived your drift and intent to tire me out with on-ſets on every ſide: for one of you did once ſend me a large Epiſtle, which was fully anſwered by me, and ſent unto him the very next day; to which nothing hath been replyed for almoſt this two years; about a year and a quarter after that, another*

Viz. I. S.

another was sent me from another of you, and another a while after that, from a third, (dwelling, as the Messenger told me, at Staplehurst, *) to me unknown: and (as I hear) my first Antagonist had resolved upon a second on-set, so soon as I had rid my fingers of him who seconded him; all which considered, your designe is evident. The third of these letters I could not answer; for indeed, I cannot read it. When I had received the second, I was even then in debate with a great Master of another sect, concerning the* Ordination of Ministers, &c. *so that I was not well at leisure to answer it; but after a while I did pen an answer, and was resolved upon sending it; till upon second thoughts I did resolve with my selfe rather to compose some briefe discourse about* Infant-baptism, *for the profit of my ordinary hearers, and so to publish it, after the preaching of it, for the more publick good of those who would vouchsafe the reading of it: which discourse I here present you with, under the name of* A Soveraign Preservative against Anabaptisme. *And indeed, those to whom it was first administred, have (many of them) professed themselves fully satisfied with it; yea, some have since brought their children of a year, and two years old, to be baptized.*

Viz. P. C. but written by I. S.

The second I received, *Feb.* 17. 1650. &c. *Viz.* T. B.

So that I have ſome hope that this ſmall Treatiſe, (which for your ſakes I publiſh) may prove (as a Preſervative *to many Staggerers, ſo) a* Reſtorative *to ſome of you. However, it will be a witneſſe againſt you; and I ſhall have the comfort of my ſincere endeavouring your reducement. I hope you ſhall find it ſeaſoned with ſalt, not ſowred with vineger, nor imbittered with gall. I had rather win you, then wound you.* Sirs, *Read this Treatiſe with impartiality, and if* (being thus meekly inſtructed) God, PERADVENTURE, ſhall give any of you (who have oppoſed your ſelves) repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth; *let him have the Glory: which is the great deſire of*

2 Tim. 2.25.

Your Servant for Jeſus ſake

MATTHIAS SYMSON.

From my Study,
*June 23. 1651.

* Then this Treatiſe was finiſhed, but the Epiſtle was ſince written.

A *Soveraign Preſervative* Againſt ANABAPTISM.

MAny are the erronious Tenents of thoſe whom we commonly call *Anabaptiſts*, wherein they diſſent not more from the Orthodox Profeſſours, then from themſelves. So that I may ſay with *Judicious Calvine*, * *Si vellem adverſus omnes errores, & falſas opiniones Anabaptiſtarum ſcribere, longum opus ſuſciperem: atque ingrederer abyſſum, unde mihi exitus non pateret.* i.e. If I would write againſt all the errours, and falſe opinions of the Anabaptiſts, I ſhould undertake a long work: and ſhould enter a bottomleſſe pit, from which there would be no coming out. For (ſaith he) *Vix unius Anabaptiſtæ caput reperiri poſſit, quod non ſit imbutum aliquâ opinione diverſâ à reliquis*: i.e. Scarcely can there be an Anabaptiſticall head found, which is not infected with ſome one opinion different from the reſt. Therefore I ſhall confine my ſelfe, in this diſcourſe, to ſpeak of that main point of Controverſie, between them and the Orthodox, *viz. Infant Baptiſme*: wherein, could

* *Vide Calvin. adverſ. Anabap. Brev. Inſtruct.*

there be an agreement, we ſhould the more eaſily convince them in other particulars.

And in treating of this point, that which I ſhall do, is to confirme theſe two Propoſitions.

1. *That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Beleevers, are to bee baptized.*

2. *That the contrary opinion,* viz. *That ſuch Infants are not to be baptized; is erroneous.* The firſt being proved, the later cannot be denied. I ſhall begin therefore with the former, *viz.*

1. *The Infants of thoſe, whom the Scripture calleth Beleevers, are to be baptized.*

It is not my deſigne, as one that ſtrives for a Victory, to amuſe my Reader with multitudes of words: I ſhall onely lay down one argument (for the proofe of this Propoſition,) which I ſhall endeavour (according to my poor ability,) to make good againſt all contradiction. The Argument is this.

That which may be concluded from the word of God, is unqueſtionably true.

But, *That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Beleevers, are to be baptized, may be concluded from the word of God.*

Therefore, *That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Believers, are to be baptized, is unqueſtionably true.*

The Propoſition of this Argument, none but *Anti-ſcripturiſts* dare deny. The weight of the Aſſumption is that which will carry the cauſe; therefore my work is to ſhew, how it may be concluded from the word of God, That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Believers, are to be baptized.

And for the Demonſtration hereof, I argue thus. 1. *Thoſe*

1. *Thoſe who are in covenant with God, are to be baptized.*

But, *It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Believers, are in covenant with God.*

Therefore, *It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Believers, are to be baptized.*

The Major Propoſition is clear from that of the Apoſtle.—[a] *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.—For, the promiſe is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* In which words, there are (amongſt others) theſe particulars. 1. *Peter's* twofold exhortation to that people; 1. *Repent.* 2. *Be baptized, &c.* 2. The end both of repentance, and baptiſme, in theſe words,—*For the remiſſion of ſins, &c.* 3. The reaſon that he layeth down, to move them both to repent, and to be baptized, in theſe words, —*For, the promiſe is unto you.* As if he ſhould have ſaid, Becauſe the promiſe is to you, therefore are you to repent, and to be baptized: Whence my Major Propoſition moſt clearly followeth, *viz.*

[a] Act. 2. 38, 39.

Thoſe who are in covenant with God, (for ſo are they to whom the promiſe is) *are to be baptized.*

The Minor I clear two wayes: 1. By teſtimony of Scripture. 2. By an argument drawn from Scripture.

The Scripture giving teſtimony thereunto, is part of that above mentioned, [b] *For the promiſe*

[b] Acts 2. 39.

promise is unto you, and to your children; and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Now, what can be more clear from this text, to an undeluded lover of the truth, then this, That the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth believers, are in covenant with God? *The promise is to you, and to your children:* you, and not onely you, but also your children, are in covenant with God.

This Text of Scripture is much excepted against.

1. According to their usuall observation on *Mat.* 28. 19. First, *teach*, then *baptize*, &c. They object, that the Apostle exhorteth them, 1. to *repent*. 2. to *be baptized*: implying (say they) that *those onely are to be baptized that can evidence their repentance.* And indeed, this was the only argument they could get for a long time, for the defence of their errour in the denyall of Infant-Baptisme.

Ans. It appeareth by the above-mentioned Analysis, that these words are a double exhortation; 1. To *repent*. 2. To *be baptized*; but not an exhortation, and a condition thereof. They may as well say, that *Jacob* was *Esau* his eldest brother, because the Lord saith, [c] *Jacob have I loved, and I hated Esau*: or that a bullock hath horns, before it hath hoofs, because of the order of those words, [d] *This also shall please the Lord better then an ox, or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* I confesse, in grown persons, profession of repentance is requisite before baptisme; but it is not so in Infants: as shall appear more plainly anon.

c Mal. 1. 2, 3.

d Psal. 69. 31.

2. They object, that those words—*Even as many as the Lord your God shall call*, doe render the meaning of *Peter* thus, *That their children should be looked upon as under the promise, if God called them.*

Answ.

Anſ. Now, to take off this objection, conſider theſe things. 1. This clauſe, *Even as many as the Lord your God ſhall call*, hath not relation to this ſentence, *To you and to your children*; but to that immediately preceding, viz. *To all that are afar off.* By which terme, *Afar off*, may be underſtood, Gentiles, *afar off* in worſhip; and Jews then unborn, and ſo *afar off* in time; or thoſe dwelling in remote places of the earth, and ſo afar *off in place*: ſo that the ſenſe muſt be this: *The promiſe is to you and your children now at preſent, you having hearkened unto the Lords call; and when the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to call thoſe that are afar off, either in worſhip, time, or place, they and their children* (notwithſtanding now *ſtrangers to the Covenant of promiſe*) *ſhall then be heirs of the Covenant of promiſe, as well as you and your children are now.* 2. If that interpretation which the Anabaptiſts mainly urge (namely, *that the Apoſtle meaneth, that onely children of beleevers are in Covenant with God, when called of God*) ſhould be admitted of, then we muſt charge the Apoſtle with redundancy in expreſſion. For if his intent had been to hold forth the promiſe onely to thoſe that are *called to beleeve actually*, then the mention of their children had been altogether needleſſe; and he would rather have ſaid, *The promiſe is to you being at preſent called, and to them that are afar off when the Lord ſhall call them.* Therefore, the *children of Beleevers* being mentioned no leſs then *their Parents*, we muſt conclude them to have ſome portion in the *promiſe*, applyed both to *them and their Parents.* For there is nothing ſet down in Scripture, but it hath its force. [e] *Till heaven and earth paſſe, one jot, or one title ſhall in no wiſe paſſe from the Law, till all be fulfilled.* [e] Mat. 5. 18.

3. This

3. This interpretation, utterly overthrowes and weakens the ſtrength of the Apoſtles argument, which is, *that upon their imbracing Chriſt, they ſhould be in a better condition, then they were in under the Law.* And hee would very hardly have made them beleeve this, if hee muſt be interpreted thus. *You Jewes* (for it appeareth [f] that they were Jews to whom the Apoſtle ſpake this) *have formerly been a people in Covenant with God, as alſo your children* [g]. *In the fulneſſe of time God ſent his Son unto you* [h], *whom ye ignorantly crucified* [i]. *him hath God made both Lord and Chriſt* [k]. *H m hath God exalted* [l]. *He hath obtained a better miniſtry (then was formerly) by how much alſo he is the Mediatour of a better Covenant, which was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes* [m]. *Now therefore, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt. And (that it may appear you ſhall be bettered and not worſted hereby) you ſhall be taken into Covenant your ſelves; but as for your children, (formerly in Covenant with you) they ſhall be in no better condition then the moſt barbarous Pagans in the world, afar off, ſtrangers to the Covenant of promiſe; and when God ſhall call them, or any of the heathen, their particular perſons ſhall be taken into Covenant, but their children ſtill left out.* Certainly, this had been no comfortable argument to have perſwaded them to have embraced the Goſpel, or to have beleeved that they ſhould be bettered by it. Nay, the Apoſtle might rather have expected an anſwer from them thus: *Both we and our children have been hitherto in Covenant with God; and now you tell us of taking in our ſelves, but leaving out our children; which we conceive, is an eſtate inferiour to the former.* And thus I have proved the Mi-

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[f] Act. 2. 36.
[g] Gen. 17. 7.
[h] Gal. 4. 4. 5.
[i] Luk. 23. 34.
[wth] Act. 2. 36.
[k] Ibid.
[l] Act. 5. 31.
[m] Heb. 8. 6.

nor Propoſition, by an expreſſe text of Scripture: viz.

That the infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth beleevers, are in Covenant with God.

2. The argument drawn from Scripture for the proof of it is this.

Thoſe who were once taken into Covenant, and are not yet caſt out, are in Covenant with God.

But *the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth Beleevers, were once taken into Covenant, and are not yet caſt out.*

Therefore, *The Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth beleevers, are in Covenant with God.*

The Major I ſuppoſe no man will deny, as knowing that a *church-member* keepeth his ſtanding, till *caſt out* [n]. And that the relation between husband and wife remaineth, till diſſolved, either by *divorce* [o], *or death* [p].

[n] 1 Cor. 5. 2.
[o] Jer. 3. 1.
[p] 1 Cor. 7. 39.

The Minor is that which will be denyed. For if neither be denied, the concluſion muſt be granted. And therefore I ſhall by parts (I truſt undenyably) prove it. And here I have to ſhew, 1. *That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth beleevers, were once taken into Covenant.* 2. *That they are not yet caſt out.*

1. The Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth beleevers were once taken into Covenant with God. This is clear by an expreſſe text of Scripture; [q] *And I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy ſeed after thee.* &c. In which words, we have theſe things conſiderable. 1. The Covenant it ſelfe, in theſe words, *To be a GOD to thee and thy ſeed after thee.*

[q] Gen. 17. 7.

2. The

2. The parties between whom this Covenant is made. 1. *God.* 2. *The beleever and his seed. I will establish my Covenant between Me and Thee, and Thy Seed after thee*, &c. 3. The nature of this Covenant, and that is its *perpetuity*, which is evident, in that it is said to be, ESTABLISHED FOR AN EVERLASTING COVENANT. And that by Seed is to be understood Infants, it will appear from these words; [r] Gen. 17. 10, 12. *This is my Covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee, Every Man-child among you shall be circumcised —— And he that is Eight dayes old shall be circumcised among you.* Now who can but see from this text, That the *Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers, were once taken into Covenant with God?*

Obj. But it may be objected, That this Covenant whereinto Abraham and his seed were taken, *was not a pure Gospel Covenant*, because of that promise subjoyned, [t] Gen. 17. 8. *I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee,* THE LAND WHEREIN THOU ART A STRANGER, ALL THE LAND OF CANAAN, FOR AN EVERLASTING POSSESSION, *and I will be their God.*

Answ. Now to this I answer; 1. Outward things, as appurtenances, altered not the Covenant, neither did they mix it; for then is that Covenant under which we live also mix'd, because thereto are temporal promises [s] subjoyned. [s] Rom. 8. 32. 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 2. I finde that the *stranger* was to be *circumcised*, and so taken *into Covenant* [u], when notwithstanding he might not inherit any part of the Land of Canaan. For the severall inheritances of the children of Israel, were not to remove from one tribe to * another; much lesse from an Israe- [u] Gen. 17. 12, 13, 14. * Num. 36. 7, 8, 9.

lite

lite to a ſtranger. So that, notwithſtanding this temporall promiſe of the Land of Canaan, ſubjoyned to the Covenant made with Abraham and his ſeed, it remaineth an intire Goſpel Covenant. But. 3. There is moreover, ſufficient evidence, that this Covenant was *a pure Goſpel Covenant*. For, 1. It is termed *a Covenant of* [x] *Juſtification*. 2. It is called *a Covenant of* [y] *grace*. 3. It is termed *a Covenant of* [z] *faith* 4. Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to be the Mediatour of it; *For it was confirmed of God in Chriſt* [a]. And that wee may be ſure that this Covenant here ſpoken of, is the Covenant made with Abraham, it is ſaid in this ſame very verſe to be confirmed *four hundred and thirty yeers before the Law*. And thus I have *ſhewed, That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth beleevers, were once taken into Covenant.*

[x] Rom. 4. 2. 3.
[y] ver. 4.
[z] ver. 13.
[a] Gal. 3. 17.

2. I am now to ſhew, that they are not yet caſt out of Covenant. And hereof I have two reaſons to render. 1. The Covenant wherinto they were taken, is ſaid to be an *Eſtabliſhed, ——Everlaſting Covenant* [b]; which it could not have been called (as it is) both in relation to the beleever, and his ſeed, if the infant ſeed of beleevers were to be taken in under *the Law*, but left out under *the Goſpel*. 2. It cannot be any where ſhewed, that they were formally Diſ-covenanted; which had it been done, it would certainly have been upon record. We have more reaſon to call upon the Anabaptiſts for an expreſſe text forbidding baptiſme (the Common priviledg of thoſe in Covenant with God) to Infants, then they have to call upon us for a ſyllabicall text allowing them baptiſme: ſince it is upon record that they were *taken into Covenant*, (which gives right to baptiſme) and it is no where

[b] Gen. 17. 7

ſo

so much as hinted at, either directly, or by way of consequence, that ever they were *cast out*. And thus I have beaten out one way whereby to let you see, That it may be concluded from the word of God,

That the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers are to be baptized, viz.

Those who are in Covenant with God are to be baptized.

But, it may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers, are in Covenant with God. Therefore,

It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers are to be baptized.

The Minor of which argument hath been proved thus.

Those who were once taken into Covenant, and are not yet cast out, are in Covenant with God.

But the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers were once taken into Covenant, and are not yet cast out. Therefore,

The Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers are in Covenant with God.

Obj. But me thinks, I foresee an argument newly started up, wherewith some men thinke themselves able to evade and overthrow all that hath been hitherto spoken from the word of God in defence of *Infant-Baptisme*. And I thus frame it.

Those that are in Covenant with God are not to be baptized till the time appointed. *Gen.* 17. 12.

But

But the time appointed for thoſe in Covenant with God, is not till the party to be baptized be able to make a profeſſion of his faith. Therefore

Infants (though in Covenant with God) are not to be baptized.

This is the beſt frame whereinto I can put the argument, which with ſome, appeareth ſufficient to carry the cauſe againſt us.

Now to this I anſwer. 1. By admitting the Major propoſition, as being clear from that text of Scripture inſtanced. 2. By denying the Minor. For. 1. The *circumciſion* of thoſe in Covenant, was not delayed till the party to be *circumciſed* came to make a profeſſion, &c. *Every Male was to be circumciſed the eighth day* [c]. And I ſuppoſe, no man will think that at that age they were able to make a *profeſsion of their faith*. Why God forbade that they ſhould be circumciſed till they were *eight dayes old*, whether for any typicall reaſon, or in regard they were not fit in nature to undergo ſo ſharp a pain before the ſeventh day was paſſed, I diſpute not; It is ſufficient for the defence of this cauſe (which God will own) that hence it may be concluded, that *Infants were in Covenant with God, and did partake of the ſeal thereof in their Infancy*. For although the Lord were wrath with *Moſes* for neglecting to *circumciſe his child on the eighth day*, yet being circumciſed in his *childhood*, the Lord was pacified towards him [d]. Which could not have been true *circumciſion*, according to the *Anabaptiſticall* interpretation of the place for circumciſion on the *Eighth day*. More alſo may be ſeen to this purpoſe [e], where there is menti-

[c] Gen 17.13.

[d] Exo.4.24.25 26.

[e] Joſ.5. 3,4,5, 6.

on of *circumcision delayed*, notwithstanding the mentioned command; which could not have been done, if that *Circumstance of time had been essentiall to the seal.* 2. *The time appointed for baptisme, is when it doth appear that the party to be baptized is in covenant*; And I have shewed sufficiently, *that the Infants of believers are in covenant.* So that, notwithstanding this argument, what I have said, remaineth good.

But why then (may it be demanded) do you not *baptize Infants* so soon as they are born, since they are then in covenant, and the time appointed for *Baptisme*, is when it doth appeare that the partie to be *baptized*, is in covenant?

Answ. 1. Because we hold not Baptisme *absolutely necessary to salvation*: the *Infant-seed* of the *Jews* were in covenant so soon as they were born, yet *not to be circumcised till eight days old.*

[f] Mat. 9. 13. 2. *God will have mercy, and not sacrifice* [f], The necessary delay thereof dis-goods not the ordi-

[g] Josh. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. nance [g]. I suppose if a grown person should send to any society of *Anabaptists*, and desire *baptisme* upon the *profession of his faith*, being in the mean time at the point of death, by sickness and bodily distemper, they would very hardly be perswaded to lead him out *unto a river to dip him.* And thus far by way of prevention.

And thus of the first way how it may be concluded from the word of God, that

The Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth believers, are to be baptized.

I proceed to the second.

2. *Persons duly qualified for baptisme, are to be baptized.*

But

But, *It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, are perſons duly qualified for baptiſme.* Therefore

It may be concluded from the word of God, That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, are to be baptized.

The Minor of this argument, I prove thus,

Thoſe who have faith and holineſſe, who are called Diſciples, and ſervants of God, are perſons duly qualified for baptiſme.

But, *It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, have faith and holineſſe, and are called Diſciples, and ſervants of God.* Therefore,

It may be concluded from the word of God, That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, are perſons duly qualified for baptiſme.

And the Minor of this Argument, I ſhall prove by parts.

1. *Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, have Faith.* This appeareth two ways. 1. *By* expreſſe Text of Scripture. 2. *By* neceſſary conſequence.

1 It appeareth by expreſſe text of Scripture; As *Mat.* 18. 6. where Chriſt ſaith,——*Theſe little ones—Believe in me:* which words being compared with *ver.* 21. where it is ſaid—*That Jeſus called a little child unto him,* it will appear, that thoſe *little ones* which are ſaid to *believe in Chriſt,* were children in reſpect of *age.* Mat. 18. 2, 6.

2. It appeareth alſo by neceſſary conſequence. For the Infants of believers under the Law had

faith: which is evident from this, that they did partake of *Circumcision* [h], which is called *A seal of the righteousnesse of the faith* [i], &c. For those are the words of the Apostle.

h Gen. 17. 12.
i Rom. 4. 11.

2. *Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth believers, have Holinesse.* This followeth from that which I have said concerning their faith. But yet I shall take a little more pains to make it out.

There is a twofold Holinesse. 1. *Fœderall*, or *covenant Holinesse*: which all the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth believers are said to have. 2. *Inherent Holinesse*, which also may be affirmed of some of them.

1. The Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth believers, have fœderall Holinesse. This is clear chiefly from two places of Scripture.

1. One is *Rom.* 11. 16. where saith the Apostle, *For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the Root be holy, so are the Branches.* Where, by these terms, *The* FIRST FRUIT, and ROOT, are understood *Believers*; and by the LUMP, and BRANCHES, are understood *their Seed.* Or, rather (that I may render the sense of the Text without the least exception,) By the FIRST FRUIT, *and* ROOT, we may understand *Abraham*, the father of the faithfull; and by the LUMP, *and* BRANCHES, his *Posterity.* So that the Doctrine of this text is this,

Rom. 11. 16.

The believer being holy, his seed is also holy.

Mistake me not, I speak not of an *inherent holinesse*, but of a *fœderall holinesse*: Of which more anon.

Master Blackwood (whose learning and conversation, could they be abstracted from his unsound opinions, merit him much reverence and esteem) telleth us, *that by the First-fruits and Root,*

Root, are here meant Chriſt [k]. And he is well anſwered by *Maſter Blake* [l]. *That Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael, are the Root.* Take theſe his conſiderations.

[k] Storming of Antichriſt.

[l] Infant baptiſme freed from Antichriſtianiſm. pag. 70.

1. *The Root is that of which the whole Body of the Jewes by profeſſion once were Branches, but now cut off. The Apoſtle there* (ſaith he) *diſputes of their cutting off, who once were Branches: but the whole Body of this Nation were never Branches of Chriſt: Many of them were of their Father the* [m] *Divell.*

[m] John 8. 44.

2. *Root and Branch in the Text, are ſuch as may be ſevered, and the Branch again inoculated; but Chriſt and his Branches cannot be ſevered: therefore, Root and Branch is not here Chriſt and his Members.*

3. *That is the Root and Firſt-fruits which renders them beloved, when in reſpect of the Goſpell they were enemies, and in unbeliefe. Beloved, I mean* (ſaith he) *with a love of benevolence, or as I may ſay, intention of good to that people: but Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, render them in this condition, thus beloved* [n]. And thus you ſee how that worthy man hath made it appear by ſtrong reaſons, that by the *Root*, &c. is not meant *Chriſt and his myſticall Body, but Abraham and his Seed.*

[n] Rom. 11. 28.

Queſtion. But how can the Seed of *Abraham*, and ſo of the faithfull, be termed *holy*, ſince many of the *Jewes* were *rebellious?* and experience teacheth, that of the *beſt parents* come oftentimes the *worſt children?*

Anſwer. Perſonall and *Inherent Holineſſe* doth not paſſe from the *Parents* unto the *Children*, as coming by regenera-

tion, not generation: Howbeit, many outward priviledges and qualities do descend from parents to children, as Free-men beget Free-men, *Jewes* beget *Jewes*, Christians beget Christians, by the blessing of the ° *Covenant*, which is made (as is already evidenced) both to parents and children.

h *Mr Tho. Wilson* on Rom. 16.

So that the holinesse which is attributed to the Infant-seed of beleevers, is a *Covenant-holinesse*, sufficient to give right to *baptisme*. Externall holinesse giveth right to an external seal.

Obj. If only such branches be *holy* as come from a holy root, what is this to us *Gentiles*, which are no branches of this *root*, viz. Abraham?

Ans. The Gentiles are *branches* of this root; though not *naturally and by hæreditary right*, yet by free *incision and grafting in*, Rom. 11. 17. &c. The text is plain. And thus much from Rom. 11. 16.

Rom. 11. 17.

2. The other place of Scripture to prove that the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth beleevers have holinesse, is 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. *The unbeleeving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbeleeving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now they are holy.* For the understanding of which text, consider, that the Corinthians did scruple the keeping of their infidell husbands and wives, with the children begotten and born by them; as appears *ver.* 13. And haply upon that ground, *Ezra* 10. 3, 4. Looking upon their children begotten and born by Infidell husbands and wives, as an *unholy seed*. Now the Apostle tels them, that they needed

1 Cor. 7, 14.

Ezr. 10. 3, 4.

needed not ſeparate, either from their husbands, wives, or children; becauſe (though the children of Infidells be an *Unholy ſeed*, yet) the children of a beleeving husband by an infidell or unbeleeving wife, and the children of a beleeving wife by an unbeleeving husband are *holy*: *Becauſe, the unbeleeving husband is ſanctified by the wife, and the unbeleeving wife by the husband*; that is, ſo farr as to procreate a *holy ſeed*.

This text is much excepted againſt.

Obj. 1. And firſt, they of the contrary opinion tell us, that by HOLINESSE here mentioned, is not underſtood FOEDERALL or COVENANT-HOLINESSE, but MATRIMONIALL—HOLINESSE. So that the Corinthians doubt muſt have been *whether their marriage with unbeleevers were not now void*, and *their children ſpurious*; that is, *baſtards* or *illegitimate*: and the Apoſtles anſwer is, that *becauſe the unbeleeving wife is ſanctified to the husband, &c. therefore the marriage remaineth lawfull.*

Anſ. Now to this I ſhall anſwer, by ſhewing the abſurdity of this interpretation in two things.

1. This being the meaning, the Apoſtles anſwer to the Corinthians will be found *untrue*. For the Apoſtle (according to this interpretation) muſt affirme, *that in caſe both parents be Infidels, the children are baſtards*; which cannot be; *for marriage* (being a duty of the ſecond table) *belongeth not only to Chriſtians, but alſo to infidels* and; *the children born to them, are Matrimonially*; *holy* that is, *legittimate, no leſſe then the children of Chriſtians*.

2. According to this interpretation, the Apoſtles anſwer will alſo be found *invalid*. *We doubt*, ſay the Corinthians, (according to the Anabaptiſticall interpretation) *that wee are not lawfull man and wife, and therefore our children are baſtards.* *No*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*: *Indeed, if you were not lawfull Man and Wife, your children were baſtards: but becauſe ye are lawfull man and wife, your children are ligitimate.* What ſtrength is there in this argumentative anſwer?

Obj. 2. They object *that the Unbeleeving wife is ſaid to be ſanctified as well as her children.*

Anſ. 1. *She is ſaid to be ſanctified by him*, not ſo as to be made *fœderally holy*: but ſhe is ſanctified *in him*, or *to his uſe*, as all the creatures of God
p 1 Tim. 4. 4, are p. But his children by her are ſaid to be *holy*, 5. without any ſuch reſtraint; they are *holy*, not only by a *ſanctification to the Parents uſe* (as the unbeleeving wife is; but by a *holineſſe of ſtate*, or *Covenant-Holineſs*, as being taken into the ſame Covenant of God, that their beleeving parent is taken into.

2. Some Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth beleevers have reall Inherent holineſſe; though not actually, or by way of Declaration to others, yet virtually and by way of inclination: though indeed, it be unknown to us by what way or manner the Lord worketh in them. For, *as we know not* q *what is the way*
q Eccl. 11. 5. *of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the*
See *womb of her that is with child; even ſo, we know*
Deut. 29. 29. *not the works of God who maketh all. Credo,*
Iſa. 55. 7. 8. *non probo*, was a ſpeech becoming the r Au-
r *Aug. uti.* thour. *Multo melius credendo intelliguntur,*
Trapp. in Gen. *quam*

quam intelligendo creduntur fidei Chriſtianæ myſteria; the myſteries of Chriſtian faith, are much better underſtood by beleeving them, then beleeved by underſtanding them. Yet for your clearer inſight herein, conſider theſe two things.

1. That there is power in God to worke true grace in the hearts of Infants, as appeareth by the example of *Jeremiah* [r], and *John the Baptiſt* [s], both ſanctified in the wombe: and *Timothy*, who [u] *from a child had known the holy Scriptures*. And certainly, theſe things which were *written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope* * alſo concerning our children. For although thoſe perſons were deſigned to, and imployed in extraordinary ſervice, yet were they, as *Elias* [x], *ſubject to like paſsions as wee are*.

[r] Jer. 1. 5.
[s] Lu. 1. 44.
[u] 2. Tim. 3. 15. &c.
* Rom. 15. 4.
[x] Jam. 5. 11.

2. Conſider alſo, that there is no doubt to be made of the will of God herein, ſince it is his promiſe: *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy* [y] *ſeed*: Let every beleever lay hold on it. Yet I would not be underſtood, as affirming the *reall ſanctification of all the Infants of beleevers*; theſe conſiderations are to ſhew the worke of God in the hearts of *elect Infants*, that *holineſſe* which I attribute to them, for the generality, is onely a *Covenant-Holineſſe*: for when any company of Anabaptiſts do ſtile themſelves a *Church of Saints*, they would not be underſtood as affirming the *reall ſanctification of every member*. And thus of the holineſſe of the Infant ſeed of beleevers.

[y] Deut. 30. 6. &c.

3. *They*

Acts 15.10. 3. *They are called Diſciples.* This appeareth *Acts* 15.10. Now, that by *Diſciples* there ſpoken of, are meant *Infants* as well as *grown Perſons*, I thus prove. *Thoſe on whom the falſe teachers would have put the yoke of circumciſion, are there called Diſciples*; as appeareth from the very words. *Now therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the Diſciples.* But *the falſe teachers would have put the yoke of circumciſion upon Infants, as well as grown perſons.* Therefore, *Infants as well as grown perſons are there called Diſciples.*

Now that the falſe teachers would have put the yoke of circumciſion upon Infants, as well as grown perſons, it appeareth thus. *They would have had circumciſion practiſed after the manner of Moſes*, ver. 1. But *the manner of Moſes was, that Infants as well as grown per-*
2 Gen. 17.12. *ſons were to be* 2 *circumciſed.* Neither will it be any help for them to think of telling us, that *circumciſion there ſpoken of, was onely a binding them to the obſervance of the Law.* For thoſe falſe teachers ſaid not, *Except ye keep the whole Law*, but *Except ye be circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, ye cannot be ſaved.* If notwithſtanding all that hath been ſpoken, they will ſtill hold on to deny our concluſion, and to tell us that onely *profeſſing believers* are there meant by *Diſciples:* then would I be reſolved, whether all believers are there to be underſtood, or no? To this they muſt anſwer *affirmatively*, or elſe yeild to our interpretation; and if ſo, that all believers are there meant, then it muſt follow, that women are not believers, which is abſurd; or elſe that they were to be circumciſed, which implieth a contradiction; becauſe

becauſe they are not ſubjects capable of circumciſion.

4. *They are called Servants of God*, Lev. 25. 54, 55. The text is clear in it ſelfe to a ſingle eye. Lev. 25. 54, 55

And thus of the ſecond way, how it may be concluded from the word of God, *That the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers are to be baptized*, viz.

Perſons duely qualified for baptiſme, are to be baptized.

But, it may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, are perſons duely qualified for baptiſm. Therefore,

It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, are to be baptized.

The Minor of which argument hath been proved thus.

Thoſe who have faith and holineſſe, and are called diſciples and ſervants of God, are perſons duely qualified for baptiſme.

But it may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, have faith and holineſſe, and are called diſciples and ſervants of God.

Therefore, It may be concluded from the word of God, that the Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth believers, are perſons duely qualified for baptiſme.

And thus I have proved the firſt Propoſition. *viz.*

The Infants of thoſe whom the Scripture calleth

calleth believers, are to be baptized.

2. *The contrary opinion,* viz. *That such Infants are not to be baptized, is erroneous.* Which I thus prove.

Uno absurdo dato, infinita sequuntur.

That opinion which concludeth erroneous opinions, is erroneous.

But, *The Opinion of the Anabaptists; That the Infants of those whom the Scripture calleth believers, are not to be baptized, concludeth erroneous opinions.*

Therefore

It is erroneous.

The Minor might be proved by experience; for who doth not behold amongst most of this opinion, a most shamefull sliding into most grosse and abominable opinions? being *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*[a]: having washed off their baptismall water, and received on their foreheads that brand of *evill men and seducers,* [b] *who wax worse and worse; deceiving, and being deceived.* But I shall forbeare to enumerate any of their doctrines or practices, saving onely some few absurd points which do necessarily follow their main Position.

[a] 2 Tim. 3.7. &c.

[b] 2 Tim. 3.13.

1.

Hence it followeth, *That circumcision did not of right belong to Infants under the Law.* For this opinion implieth, *that Infants have not faith.* And how then could circumcision, which (as is above-said) *was a seale of the righteousnes of faith,* belong to them?

2. Hence

2.

Hence it followeth, *That circumciſion* (which was inſtituted by God himſelfe) *was a lying ſeale*: for it was a *Seale* to Infants *of the righteouſneſſe of faith*, which (ſay the Anabaptiſts) Infants have not, &c.

3.

Hence it followeth, *That the eſtate of Believers under the Goſpell is inferiour to their former eſtate under the Law.* This all men muſt ſee, that will not cloſe their eyes againſt the light. He that hath a priviledge which is onely perſonall, muſt needs be inferiour to him that hath the ſame priviledge for himſelfe and his heirs.

4.

Hence it followeth, *That the children of believers are in no better a condition then the children of the moſt barbarous Pagans in the world:* And I dare appeale to the tender bowels of Chriſtian Parents, whether they had not rather have their children out of the world, then out of the Church. Now *that there is a difference betweene the children of Chriſtians, and the children of Infidels*, it appeareth, in as much as the Apoſtle calls the one *Unclean*, the other [c] *Holy*.

[c] 1 Cor. 7. 14.

5.

Hence it followeth, *that Infants are not capable of ſalvation.* For the want of faith which debarreth them from baptiſme, debarres them from ſalvation. *Hee that beleeveth not ſhall be Damned*, ſaith our Saviour [a]. Neither

[a] Mark 16. 16.

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ther can the Anabaptists untie this Knot any way, but we shall be thereby allowed the liberty of Infant-baptisme; *There being the same condition both of baptisme and Salvation.*

Hence possibly they have been driven to *devise a way to save Infants without faith.* Which I call a *Devised way*, because *there is no way of obtaining salvation but by faith in Christ.* For, *By grace are ye saved, through* [b] *faith.* I challenge the whole Conclave of Anabaptists to shew us in Scripture, if they be able, any one text holding forth either directly, or by way of Consequence, that there is any more *then one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme* [c]. &c. Rome will furnish them with the Doctrine of *Justification by Works*: and some of them have gone beyond this, to proclaime their owne *perfect righteousnesse.* Some of them stumbling at this blocke, thinke it the best way, to see if they can overthrow *Originall sinne.* Others stand to affirme *that all Infants dying in their Infancy are necessarily saved.* And this division of their tongues makes mee shrewdly suspect them to be Babell-builders.

[b] Eph. 2. 8.

[c] Eph. 4. 4. 5. 6. &c.

Cum relego, scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno.

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